

**HUNTLEY & PALMERS***the first name  
you think of in***BISCUITS**

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DETROIT

**PUNCH****Player's Please**

Put your best face forward . . .



HD 145

Smooth over your face and throat the rich fragrant Yardley Skin Food. Relax—in sleep or in the bath. And behold! your skin is baby-soft, clean, fresh as to-morrow's dawn!

Skin Food 6/6

Sorry, no post orders!

*Yardley*  
33 • OLD BOND STREET  
LONDON



I've flown from our British winter into this—whew! But I'm glad you insisted on 'Viyella' Service Shirts because they are cool when it's hot—and warm when it's not.

'Viyella'

Regd.



MS. 2e

## Cmdr. Campbell's QUIZ



Q. Who was the first Englishman to smoke Tobacco?

A. The first English smoker was Ralph Lane, Governor of Virginia. He brought pipe-smoking to the notice of the famous Sir Walter Raleigh who, in his turn, introduced the habit into the best circles in England. Today, most of the best people prefer Murray's.

Q. Can tobacco be grown in Great Britain?

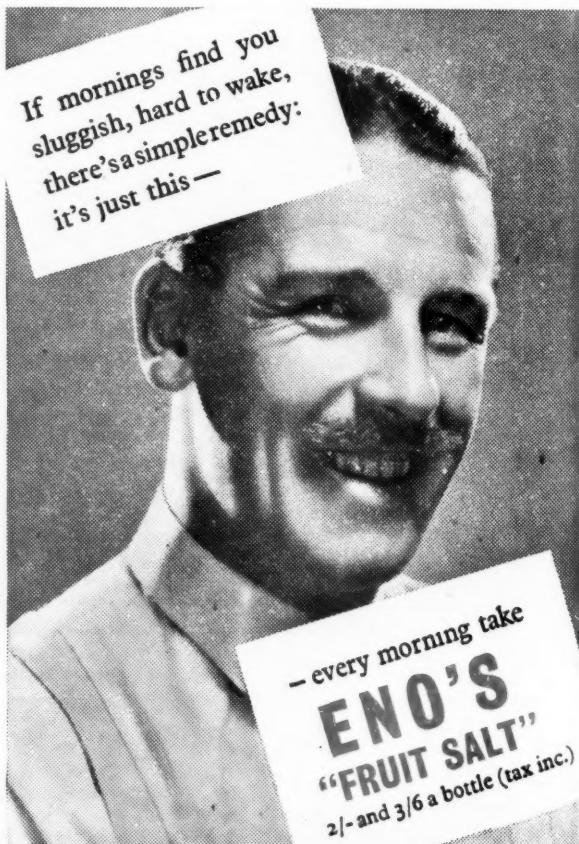
A. Yes, but adverse climatic conditions, as well as other causes, prevent successful production on any considerable scale. Anyway, why bother? You can save yourself a lot of hard digging and worry, and get a better result by simply asking for Murray's.

Q. What is a mixture tobacco?

A. A skilled blend of Virginia and Eastern leaf. If you light a pipe of Murray's Mellow Mixture, your palate will relish the unique flavour of the finest mixture known. Murray's smokes coolly, burns evenly, a really comforting tobacco. In fact, no comparable comfort is available today at as little as 2/8d. for an ounce.

### MURRAY'S MELLOW MIXTURE

MURRAY, SONS & CO. LTD., BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND,  
where good tobaccos have been skilfully blended for 100 years



# Knock *H* out of S A V I N G

**1½**

Ever counted what you spend on  
razor blades in a year? Well,  
here's a way to cut it down. Buy  
Laurel blades — 1½d. each.

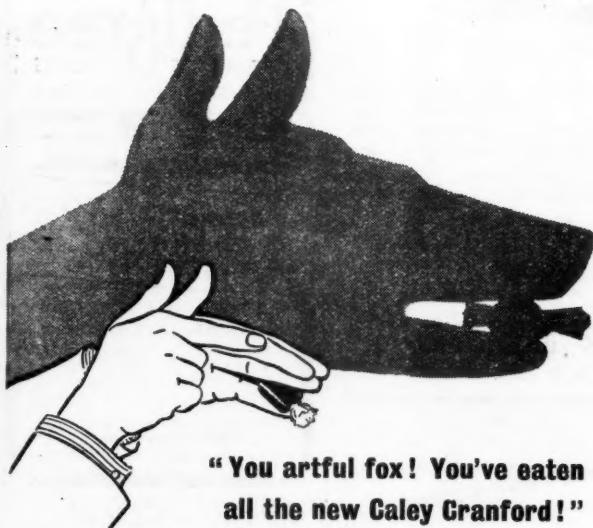
They'll last at least as long as  
any blade you can buy, and  
they'll give a smooth, easy  
shave for a long, long time. No  
better blade comes out of Sheffield,  
the 'home of the cutting edge'.

Made by  
George Lawrence Ltd.  
of Sheffield

# LAUREL

THE GOOD-TEMPERED SHEFFIELD BLADE

CVS-20



"You artful fox! You've eaten  
all the new Caley Cranford!"

Cranford is the gorgeous new chocolate assortment with 10 delicious centres; wrapped in transparent paper for perfect freshness; first hint of all the lovely things Caley's have in store for you—including your favourite FORTUNE Chocolates.

# CALEY CRANFORD

the NEW chocolate assortment—to buy NOW



S.1



"I GIVE YOU THE RECIPE,  
MY GOOD ATKINS . . . "

Dr. Oliver's bequest to his favourite coachman, just prior to his death in 1764, gave to the world a biscuit which has never been equalled for crispness and quality —

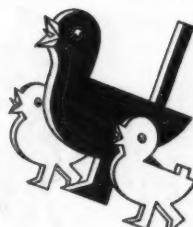
Bath Oliver.



**FORT'S**  
ORIGINAL  
**BATH OLIVER**  
BISCUITS

# BIRD'S CUSTARD

*always  
goes  
first...*



BIRD'S CUSTARD AND JELLIES

*New*  
LINIA BELTS

Made-to-order Linia Belts can only be supplied for customers who produce doctors' certificates. 1939 price and no purchase tax.

A few standard sizes are in stock at our various branches. 1939 price, plus purchase tax.

Our Re-conditioning Service can make the Linia you have almost as good as new. Moderate charges.

**J. ROUSSEL LTD.**  
179 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.I.  
Telephone: Reg. 7570

And at Birmingham,  
Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, etc.

*All the best*



Here's hoping for quite a number of things, including fewer restrictions and more Old Angus — one of life's many amenities made scarce by war. A timely request for Old Angus is sometimes rewarded.

A NOBLE SCOTCH  
—Gentle as a lamb

**OLD  
ANGUS**

O.A.4e



**TRADE MARK**

**ROUYER GUILLET BRANDY**  
COGNAC  
MAISON DE FRANCE  
ROUYER GUILLET & CO. LTD. LONDON

**TRADE MARK**

*Don't just say Brandy. say R.G.B.*

ROUYER GUILLET BRANDY — OVER 140 YEARS' REPUTATION

## Conversation Piece



THE rights of pipe smokers (once a ' vexed question ' in the newspapers) were never more stoutly maintained than by the Rev. Samuel Parr, LL.D. All society sought him as a brilliant conversationalist, but he imposed a condition: " No pipe, no Parr ! " Our Pall Mall Mixture encourages good talk. A blend for the

connoisseur ! The price is 2½/- the ½ lb. (postage 6d. extra), 10/9 the ¼ lb. (postage 4d. extra). Call at any Rothmans shop or post your order to Rothmans Ltd. (Folio H.32)5, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1

DUTY-FREE parcels to SEAC and personnel of H.M. Ships in active Commission. Ask for special order form containing full details.

**Rothman OF PALL MALL**  
*the best-known tobacconist in the world.*



By appointment  
Bacon Curers to H.M. King George VI

Previous appointment to the late King George V  
C. & T. HARRIS (CALNE) LTD. CALNE, WILTS.

**HARRIS**  
*famous for Bacon since 1770*

For six years our food factories have been, and still are, almost entirely engaged in producing Bacon, Sausages and Canned Meats for the Ministry of Food and Armed Forces. The more plentiful days to come will bring back to you many Harris delicacies including—

**HARRIS WILTSHIRE SAUSAGES**

**TRADE MARK**

**CHAPLINS Concord PORT**

15/6  
PER BOTTLE

Supplied to the public through  
the Retail Trade ONLY

W.H. CHAPLIN & CO. LTD.  
ESTD. 1847

**Pedigree**  
PRAMS & FOLDERS  
*All the best babies have them*

**L.B. LTD. London**

**GREENS LTD**  
Cigar & Wine Merchants  
37 & 38 Royal Exchange, Cornhill,  
London, E.C.3

**FINE IMPORTED  
JAMAICA CIGARS**  
A fine selection has just arrived  
for which we invite enquiries.  
(Packed in boxes of 25 each.)

We also offer a limited quantity of  
'CARASADA' CIGARS  
finest quality, British.

**Don't let a COLD  
SPOIL YOUR GAME**  
take  
**Cephos**  
THE PRACTICAL REMEDY

SOLD EVERYWHERE 1½ & 3½ inc. Pur. Tax.

**DO YOU  
SUFFER FROM  
SCIATICA, LUMBAGO, GOUT  
OR ANY RHEUMATIC AILMENT?**

TRY **CURICONES**

DOCTORS USE IT. Obtainable from all Chemists

## CAREFREE?

Not altogether, perhaps. Then the tried yet up-to-date prescription is a life policy with the Scottish Widows' Fund.

It's as essential to the smooth running of your career as tyres are to a motor car.

And there's no waiting list.

Write to the Secretary NOW, while you remember.

## SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND



Head Office:

9 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, 2

London Office:

28 Cornhill, E.C.3



### Church's shoes

are made on famous lasts, by men whose traditional feeling for leather is in tune with the needs of modern comfort.

Made by Church's of Northampton



## Happy day —

coming soon, we hope, when G.E.C. electric household appliances will once more be freely available.

The range will include kettles, toasters, fires, irons, cleaners, and all the other necessities for economically running the modern home.

**G.E.C.**  
**QUALITY PRODUCTS**  
for the post-war home

Advt. of The General Electric Co., Ltd., Magnet House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2

**'SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO HOME'**

**BY BEETLE**

The Waddon

Concrete and Building

Material Co. Ltd.\* has

patented and invented an

ingenious road spot for mark-

ing traffic lanes, pedestrian

crossings, etc. It is a pure

white shell moulded (by Streetly)

in Beetle and filled with concrete. It is visible

at night, non-staining, non-skid, requires no

maintenance, and (believe it or not) carries

the heaviest traffic. Supplies of B.I.P.

products are still limited, but their

unexpected uses are certainly not.



Wadcrete Works,  
Stafford Road, Croydon.

**BRITISH INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS, LTD.**

1 Argyll Street, London, W.1

*"Vain for the rude craftsman to attempt the beautiful; only one diamond can polish another."*

Goethe.

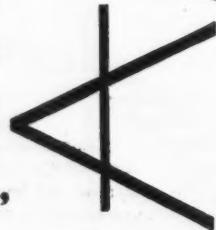
As with diamonds, so with cars. Discernment in selecting the best material is one thing: giving it the finest form of expression is another. It calls for skill and craftsmanship of the highest order. Only the polished diamond has the sparkle of a diamond. Only the Rolls-Royce has Rolls-Royce attributes.

## ROLLS-ROYCE

*The Best Car in the World*

ROLLS-ROYCE LTD., CONDUIT ST., LONDON, W.I. MAYfair 6201

This  
mathematical  
symbol  
means  
**'not less than'**



PHILIPS



**PHILIPS**

LAMPS • RADIO • X-RAY • COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT  
AND ALLIED ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS

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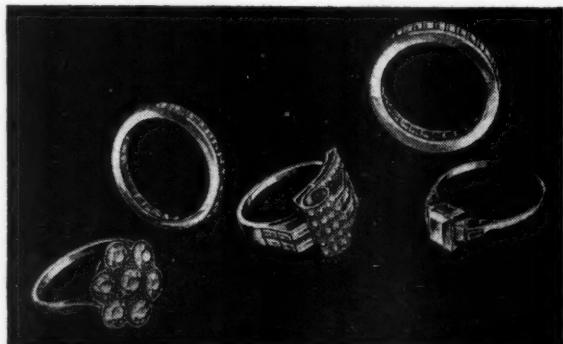


*"Oh! East is East and West is West," sighs the poet, but all the same, civilizations old and new meet in according Minton China a gratifying welcome . . . The fact is, of course, that charm and beauty and perfection have laughed at all frontiers since man in his queer wisdom made them.*

**MINTON**  
*The World's Most Beautiful China*

MINTONS LTD • STOKE-UPON-TRENT • EST. 1793

*Rings*



Exclusive design and superb setting characterize the Finnigan range of Engagement, Eternity and Dress Rings always to be seen in the Jewellery Department on the Ground Floor.

**Finnigans**

OF BOND STREET

*for individual jewellery*

17-18 NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1  
and 123 DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER, 3



# PUNCH

Or  
The London Charivari



Vol. CCX No. 5481

January 23 1946

## Charivaria

A NEW device will enable motor vehicles to move sideways. It is expected to be installed first in taxi-crabs.



Russia is getting on with rehousing. Her plan is said to be prefabricated streets ahead of ours.

According to a report, futurist drawings have been produced by a girl of seven. When she gets a little older the critics will be able to tell her what she meant.

"The reduction does not, however, apply to coupons for sugar and meat through which a hole has been punched."

*Manchester paper.*

Which is a specialized taste, anyway.

"The London bus-conductor has plenty of tact," says a writer. If there happen to be two English-speaking passengers on board he tries to arrange for them to sit together.

Thieves who stole jewellery from a Colchester shop and made themselves tea on a gas ring are thought to have come from London to take advantage of the higher pressure.

"It is difficult to know which horses to follow for the Grand National," points out a sports writer. Strangely enough, the one we back never seems to have any difficulty at all.

"Many people owe their life to the family doctor," states an M.P. And property.

There is a shortage of handkerchiefs. Official circles point out that this was foreseen during the war by the authorities when they produced pyjamas without pockets.

An American court has ruled that it is quite legal for a father to cure his small boy of smoking by forcing him to smoke strong black cigars. What he mustn't do is to cut off the supply when the boy gets to like strong black cigars.



"The wilted grass was hot beneath my bare feet as I walked across the carpet of wilted crab-grass to a patch of pawpaw sprouts. I followed a little path into the pawpaw sprouts where the white agate sun had wilted the pawpaw leaves until they hung in wilted clusters."—*From a story in "Argoey."*

Where was this? Wilts.?

A man in America was released from prison when he settled his income-tax claim in full. This is known as the go-out-as-you-pay system.



### Not Quite Up To Pa.

"NEW WINDMILL SHOW  
Peter Waring, in the 190th edition of Revudeville, is a conjurer whose patter is considerably more entertaining than his magic."—*Daily paper.*

An ornithologist recalls that while bird-watching during the war he had a narrow escape from being killed by bullets fired by soldiers in training. Apparently he had discovered a machine-gun nest.

## Quietus Wanted for Mayor's Nest

MONG my possessions that have survived the war there has lately returned to me a little packet of old newspapers, to wit several issues of *The British Gazette*, a copy of *The Fascist Bulletin* for July 25th, 1925, three columns of *The Morning Post*, June 9th, 1928, and a large portion of the *North Berks Herald* of Thursday, February 21st, 1929.

My reasons for preserving the *Gazettes* and the *Bulletin* are clear enough. The former are rare (though somebody has pinched copy No. 1, I see) and full of fascinating material about the General Strike, and the latter is of such absorbing interest that I may at some later date, unless the police come and take me away for harbouring dangerous literature, publish some extracts from it. It was news to me, for instance, that these amiable boys were proposing as early as 1925 to "sweep the Jews out of the country."

I can also account for the three columns of the *Morning Post*, because they contain a description of my old school ("Every year the Dramatic Society plays Shakespeare in a way that astounds visitors") with special drawing by John G. Platt, A.R.E. But the *North Berks Herald* is something of a mystery. I am not a North Berks man. Few if any of my friends come from that part. I had no large properties or interests in North Berks in 1929, whatever may be the case to-day. Yet I have clung to this paper for nearly seventeen years, and I want to know why.

I have looked with care through the "Births, Marriages and Deaths," but without result. My withers are unruled. I have scanned the advertisements. Somebody offers a Pure-Bred Brown Leghorn Cockerel, 8 months old, for 12s. 6d. What is the use of that to me? I kept no hens in 1929, and by now of course the bird, at 17½ years, must be useless even as a boiler. I have studied the Local News column, but none of the items, however significant in 1929, really stands the test of time.

### "MOULSFORD REFUSE PIT"

At the last meeting it was reported that Colonel Jones had offered a disused pit for the disposal of Moulsoford house refuse at a rent of £2 per annum. A letter was now read from the Parish Meeting to the effect that the usual rent for such a pit was from 10s. to 15s., but the parish were prepared to pay £1. On the proposition of Mr. Morris, seconded by Mr. Hunt, it was resolved that Colonel Jones be asked to accept £1.

I hope I am not reopening old sores by dragging up this forgotten controversy once more into the light of day. I only reproduce this item as an example of the kind of thing I cannot believe I ever cared deeply about. Or rather, if I had felt keenly in the matter, I should surely have kept the next issue as well, to see whether Colonel Jones let his pit go for £1 or stuck out indomitably for £2. There may have been a compromise. It is possible that the Colonel let the Parish Council have half the pit at their price, on the understanding that negotiations would be reopened when the refuse showed signs of overflowing into the other half. But I can't honestly say I care.

I feel the same lack of enthusiasm about a paragraph headed

### COW RUNS AMOK IN THAME

The incident must have been exciting at the time (in fact we are explicitly told "There was excitement in Thame on Tuesday") and no doubt there was much wagging of tongues in the Spread eagle that evening, but it cuts no

ice to-day. Even in Thame itself memory must have grown dim, unless perhaps the drover, "a man named Hedges, of Chinnor Road," who was fortunate enough to escape injury, is still alive to tell the tale to his wondering grandchildren.

I turn to page 6, on which two sub-headings catch my eye. "GREASE STAINS ON LEATHER" and "MR. CHURCHILL AND A MARE'S NEST." Did you know that grease stains may be removed from leather chair-covers by rubbing with linseed oil and vinegar? Boil the oil first, and when nearly cold pour in a pint of vinegar. Apply with a clean piece of flannel. Or, if you don't care about grease stains, try this:

"Mr. Winston Churchill has given the quietus to the latest mare's nest affecting the Social Insurance Scheme."

Nobody can pretend to be unmoved by the reflection that as long ago as 1929 Mr. Churchill was tirelessly giving the quietus to mare's nests of one kind and another. He has rendered greater services to his country since then, and given the quietus to nests of more venomous creatures than poor old female horses, but it may please him, none the less, if these words should meet his eye in the hot sunshine of Miami, to know that in one home at least the way he cooked the goose of that old Social Insurance canard has not been forgotten.

"The Pope's special train which will run to his new station by the Vatican will contain a chapel with a Papal altar and a Madonna of Raphael's. This is a long step from the open trucks in which the first railway travellers made their journeys."

This is on page 3, and few will quarrel with the writer's comment. But how much progress has been made in the seventeen years since the paragraph was written? How many Bellinis, Titians, Tintoretos, Fra Angelicos or El Grecos will you see in the rolling stock of the Great Western, the Southern, the L.M.S. or the L.N.E.R. to-day? Precious few; and what there are are probably reproductions. Is it too much to hope that when the Government assumes responsibility for British Railways they will take a leaf out of the *North Berks Herald* for February 21st, 1929?

Not that I want to give the impression that 1929 was much of an annus mirabilis. Look at this, under the heading "Things That Interest Women"—

"Never has pulling and hauling and the work of the body been held in so much scorn as it is now."

There may not be a Papal altar on the 9.15 to-day, but we do know something about pulling and hauling and the work of the body.

At least, I do. What I don't know is why—good paper though it is—I have kept a copy of the *North Berks Herald* dated 21st February, 1929.

But, stay. What is this?—

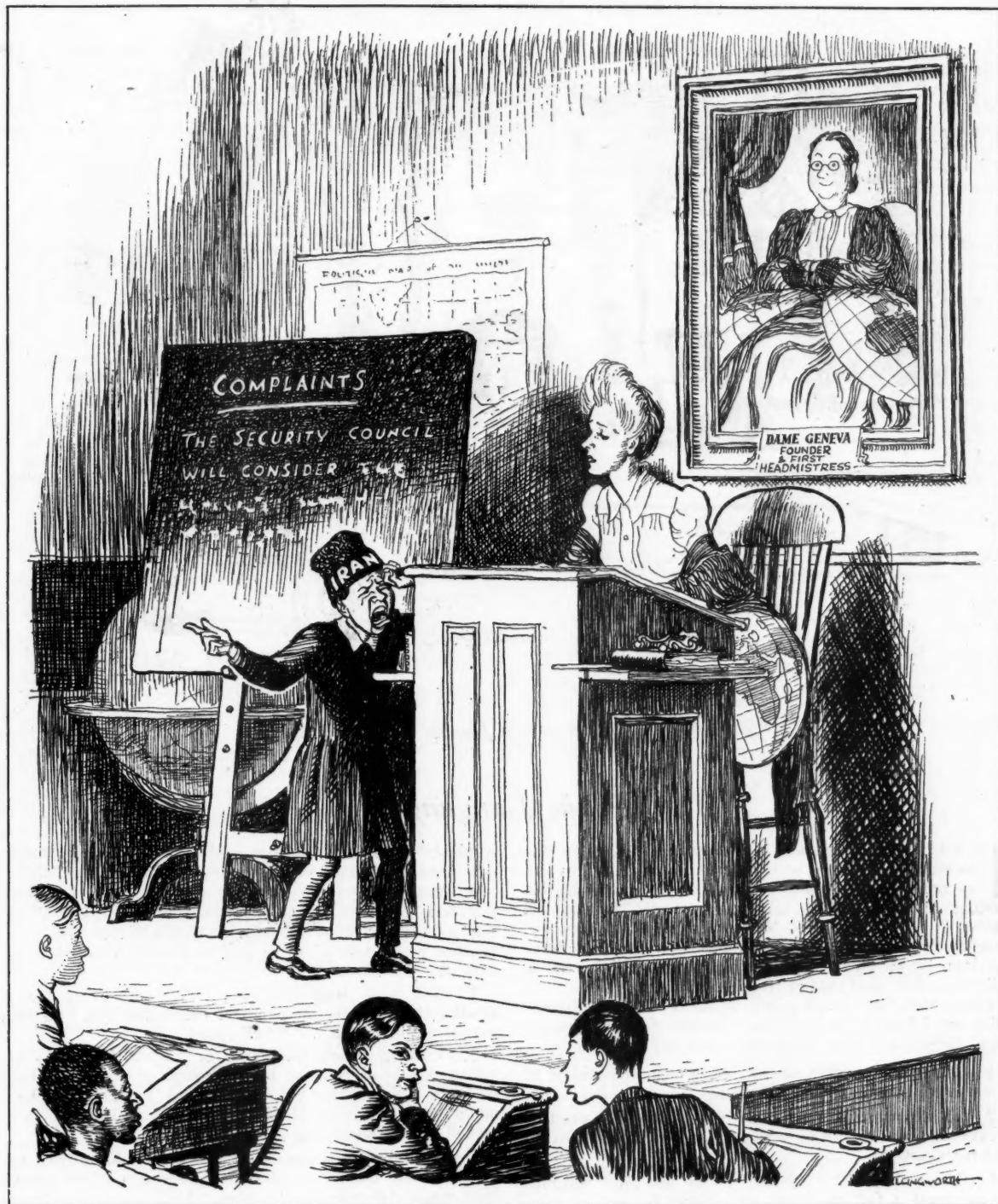
### "BOROUGH BENCH—TUESDAY"

Before the Mayor of Abingdon . . ."

I do not propose to go on with this. Let it suffice to say that the offence was of an undergraduate nature, that the fine was 5s. and that the paper, by confusing the number of the defendant's lodgings with his age, wrongfully made it appear that he was old enough to know better—probably an actionable error.

However, at this late date I shall take no action against the proprietors of the *North Berks Herald*, beyond destroying by fire and with every circumstance of ignominy one of their old back-numbers.

H. F. E.



### THE NEW HEADMISTRESS

*Miss Uno.* "Trouble already? Now's my chance to show I can do better than my predecessor."



*"Won't be long before it's a fine old road-house again."*

### Plain Language

**I**N this age of lawlessness it is very hard to get anyone to see the difference between freedom and licence, and to nothing does this apply so much as to illegible writing. If a man can't help writing badly, he can still follow a few simple rules in the interests of decency, courtesy, kindness and commonsense. Let us have freedom, by all means, but not anarchy. "All I want is a little civility, and that of the cheapest sort."

I have therefore drawn up a little list of the most obvious rules, and I hope it comes to the attention of Cousin George, Aunt Esther, old Mrs. Timberlake, and my wife:

1. If a correspondent uses a full stop in the middle of a sentence, that is an unfriendly act.
2. If he joins two words together to seem one word or breaks one word in half to seem two words, that is cheating and malpractice.
3. If he abbreviates, so that *which* not only becomes *wh* (without a full stop) but looks like *the*, *out*, or *into*, that is criminal negligence.
4. If he makes capital letters look like small letters, that is lese-majesty and malicious damage to property.
5. The use of unfamiliar words and languages, which

would be mere snobbery in a legible letter, becomes rudeness in an illegible one and amounts to whispering in public.

6. Misspelling under these circumstances becomes manslaughter, if it kills me, and justifies homicide if I kill the writer; and that includes fratricide . . . I have a brother who spells *pique* as *peak* and then scribbles it to look like *pear*.

7. Not even legible writing can stand being made smaller than the requirements of the naked eye, and the excuse of thrift will not be accepted.

8. Writing which undulates in an endless series of waves may be all right on a seismograph or barograph, but to write *name* as four *Ns*, *ran* as two *Ms*, and *manners* *makyth man* as thirteen *Ms* is meaningless and I disassociate myself from friends who talk like that.

I can think of a dozen other rules, but I have tried to keep my list down to the bare essentials. Too many laws make still more lawlessness. All I want is to have my friends stop mumbling and speak out fearlessly. Only that, believe me, will end suspicion, misunderstanding, hatred, contempt, deadlocks, bottlenecks, shortness of temper, nervous exhaustion, and black spots before the eyes.

P.S.—I have typed this, for clarity.

## You Will, Oscar (Heh, Heh, Heh)

"YEARS ago," observed Cogbottle, "I heard a radio programme in a series which never, I think, received the praise it deserved, in which the comic—it was Harry Tate, Junior—said that he or somebody else was going to be rich beyond the dreams of Aberystwyth. It has rankled in my mind ever since that I cannot say I thought of that myself."

He cocked an eye at Upfoot, who had already opened his mouth to say "You will, Oscar," but closed it again when he saw that the remark was expected:

"However, there are other blossoms in the same or an adjoining field," Cogbottle went on more cheerfully, "that were undoubtedly cultivated by me, whether or no similar ones have sprung up anywhere else."

He paused again. Upfoot made no sign. Cogbottle said "Don't you want to know what they are?"

"Surely," said Upfoot, "you were about to tell me, anyway?"

"Oh, well," said Cogbottle. He cleared his throat and went on "Well—the one I like best I think is 'beyond the wit of man to Devizes.'"

"In what everyday circumstances, God forbid," Upfoot asked at length, "is that phrase supposed to arise naturally out of the conversation?"

"Who's talking about everyday circumstances?"

"I am."

Cogbottle assumed a schoolmasterish look. "You seem to me," he said, "to be like those people in certain current controversies who attach such tremendous importance to the title of a picture. If a painting is called something—what did you say?"

"I merely said 'Here we go again,'" Upfoot said in a resigned tone.

"Oh. If a painting, I say, is called something, these people are outraged if they cannot immediately see in the picture an obvious representation of the object or objects mentioned in the title. The idea of a title as part of the picture, as a factor in the effect it is designed to have on the observer, has never occurred to them: all they understand is the title as a method of identification. If the picture is called 'Head of a Woman' and they can say 'It looks to me more like a piece of wood and a fried egg,' they think they have made a prodigious point, and struck a telling blow against modern art. Bless me, they might as well write to *The Times* and with elephantine facetiousness put forward as an important piece of literary criticism the view that the so-called novel *Gone With the Wind* seems to them more like a story of the American Civil War, heh, heh, heh."

"Heh, heh, heh," said Upfoot politely. "Tell me, how does this come into the subject we—the subject you began to discuss?"

"Literal-mindedness," said Cogbottle. "I was comparing your kind of literal-mindedness with theirs. You demand some possible 'everyday circumstances' in which my topographical crack could naturally arise; they demand that a painting should be an exact illustration of its title, or a title the exact description of the picture. This, by the way, I think is one reason why many of them are more angered by Paul Klee than by Picasso: Klee doesn't seem to play fair with them: they can't even pretend that some of his titles are meant to be taken literally. A phrase like 'Becoming Swampy' for instance offers them no purchase at all, it's completely ineffective to say 'Well it doesn't look anything like "Becoming Swampy" to me,' because hardly any literal interpretation is possible."

Upfoot had pulled out of his pocket what proved to be the catalogue of the Klee exhibition, and he now read out "'84. Idiot Dwarf in a Trance.' What price that?"

"There you are!" cried Cogbottle, delighted. "That's no use to them, either. That's exactly the sort of phrase they'd be only too glad to use about a picture provided that its catalogue title was something like 'Portrait of Mme. X' or 'Landscape.' I can just hear them, I can just see their letters in *The Times*—'It looks to me more like an idiot dwarf in a trance, heh, heh, heh.'"

"What is all this 'heh, heh, heh' business?" said Upfoot, turning over the pages. "Are you suggesting that anyone could get 'heh, heh, heh' into a letter in *The Times*—*The Times*, which won't even allow you the word 'overseas' and prints it as 'oversea' even when reporting speeches?"

"I use it to indicate a tone," said Cogbottle. "A tone of voice, a manner of writing." He reflected for a moment and then said "As a matter of fact, it's only just struck me, but I think 'Beyond the Wit of Man to Devizes' would make rather a good title for a Klee. I can see the picture in my mind's eye now."

"Pooh," said Upfoot, putting the catalogue back in his pocket. "It looks to me—heh, heh, heh—it looks to me more like 'Acton Speaks Louder Than Words.'"

Cogbottle looked surprised. "I never thought of that one," he admitted. "Not that it's particularly—"

"Still, if you like to say you did think of it, Oscar—" Cogbottle said: "No sooner said than Dungeness."

R. M.

**AN OVER-RIDING THOUGHT.** We have ascertained that the present efficiency of the atom bomb is one tenth of the theoretical maximum. Our information is that in the course of five years this will be increased to five per cent."—"National News-Letter."

If this rate of increase keeps up, there seems to be some hope after all.



"My own patent—every time the rear lamp goes out,  
the front wheel comes off."

## My Lifetime in Basic Industry

X—Scowle Wakes

**O**N a map showing the hinterlands of Blackpool and Llandudno the village of Scowle would stand splendidly isolated in the zone of penumbral uncertainty—that is if the social set-up in Scowle has remained unchanged these forty years. You see, as I knew it, the village was divided very evenly in its allegiance to the two holiday resorts, and for a month or more preceding the annual wakes there was bitter rivalry between the two camps. Scowleans were much of a muckness in matters of wherewithal, education and birth, so that this somewhat artificial friction was the only really potent force making for social cleavage. As such it was welcomed as a substitute for class warfare in a community almost devoid of bourgeoisie.

For as far back as I can remember our family had journeyed to Blackpool every year on the first Saturday in August; and every love-match in which we had been engaged had started on one or other of that famous resort's wealth of piers. Indeed, so rigidly was this holiday tradition upheld that intermarriage between Blackpool-goers and Llandudno-goers was unthinkable—until my brother Caleb startled us one evening in July 1902 with his strange proposition.

"Ah'll no' be goin' wi' thee t' Blackpool at wakes," he said. "Ah've a mind t' ave a look on t' other place for a change."

My mother dropped her knife and spoon with a crash and stopped chewing. Her face had gone dead white.

"Say that again," she said.

"Ah've tould thee, Ah'm gooin' t' Llandudny wi' Dan Uskub."

"As the taken leave o' thee senses, lad?" my mother yelled. "Tha knows reight enough as we're Blackpool folk."

"Aye, mother," said Caleb, "but Ah've a mind . . ."

"Stubborn young fool!" said my father.

The altercation then developed along conventional lines, with my mother warning Caleb that his wilfulness would cost him a roof over his head and my father urging postponement of the wordy battle in the interests of peace and quiet.

Caleb had left his meal unfinished and was putting on his cap when my grandfather Ebby spoke for the first time.

"Ah s'pose Molly Turner's a-gooin' t' Llandudny, like as not?" he said with heavy sarcasm.

The effect was dramatic. Caleb swung round, his face flushing hotly. My mother jumped up, hopped round

the table and, seizing my grandfather by his hair, jerked his head to within an inch of her own.

"An' wha's Turner's wench t' do wi' it, owd mon?" she said.

"Aye," said my father, "out wi' it, Ebby lad, if tha'st owt t' tell."

Then, with his head locked in my mother's vice-like grip, old Ebby told how, when he had been collecting fragments of dolerite for his geological studies, he had seen Caleb wheeling Molly Turner's bicycle over Barlow's Pike.

"Is this reight, Caleb?" my mother yelled.

And for answer my brother turned on his heel and strode out, banging the door so violently that the harmonium emitted a faint and discordant obbligato.

For the next few days life in the cottage became unbearable. My mother had set her heart on Caleb marrying into some good "coal-heaving stock," as she put it, and Caleb's waywardness shocked, infuriated and disgusted her by turn. In her view the daughter of the proprietor of Turner's Emporium was *ipso facto* an unprincipled baggage.

"The lad's made 'is bed," she said, "now e'on lay in it."

And the family agreed that there could be no other solution. Only marriage could put a respectable face on the shameful intrigue.

The reader may protest, as Caleb did, that my mother was making a mountain out of a molehill, that there was no shred of evidence to prove his guilt; but it must be remembered that ever since the frightful case of Lorna Benskin's penny-farthing fifty years earlier Scowle had been ready to believe the worst of anything associated with ladies' bicycles.

Once my mother's mind was made up her course of action was clear. She forbade my brother Caleb to meet the Turner girl until the couple could be brought together again decently at Llandudno. It says much for my mother's strength of character that she was willing to break with a century-old tradition and incur the ridicule of the village in order that the proprieties might be observed. Old Ebby, now stricken with remorse for his untimely outburst, was sent off to Ashbridge station to book our tickets for the journey to North Wales.

In a way I suffered as badly as anyone from my mother's fury during



"Do you mind if I sit here, Miss? It seems a shame to disturb the other tables."

the next fortnight. As soon as she had written Caleb off as a mining loss—it was taken for granted that once married he would eschew the Orange No. 2 Pit for a safe job at the Emporium and produce a family of shopkeepers—she turned her attention to me and my future. There was something rather pitiful about her desperate anxiety to fit me mentally and physically for life at the Dribben seam. She kept me from school altogether and put me through an intensified course of training with my little pick. The bucket and spade which she bought for me to use on Llandudno sands were full-size and the heaviest obtainable in the village.

On the Saturday before Bank-Holiday Monday we set off, a mournful party, across the fells for Ashbridge station. My brother Caleb had my mother's engagement ring in his pocket and a look of abject misery in his eyes. The girls were irritable and cross. My father had the appearance of a martyr. For myself, I was reasonably happy, though the bucket and spade taxed my strength very sorely.

Somewhat sheepishly we joined the great crowd at Ashbridge station. The first train in was the Blackpool excursion and there were tears in our eyes as we watched our erstwhile colleagues clamber aboard.

Suddenly my father swore monosyllabically and explosively and pointed a shaking finger to the lower end of the platform where the Turners were filing into their carriage. We were so astonished at this strange development that we could only stand and stare.

The whistle blew and the Blackpool excursion moved. As it passed I saw the Turners gazing at us in complete bewilderment. Molly was crying.

As things turned out the misunderstanding was probably for the best, for by the end of the holiday Caleb had found a new sweetheart—a girl of impeccable mining background of whom my mother warmly approved. She was the daughter of Bob Makinson, the "butty."

HOD.

• •

## I Want a Permit.

### The Cry of a Crazy Citizen

**I** WANT a permit  
To ask for a licence  
To make application  
For a nice fat form.  
It must be a fat one,  
To last for ages:  
No, no, not that one—  
I want more pages,

## PUNCH or *The London Charivari*

### THE CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN

#### THE PRESS

*Tony*

Before reading the daily paper.



After reading the daily paper.

#### 1. During the worst days of the war



Before reading the daily paper.



After reading the daily paper.

#### 2. To-day

With wide open spaces  
For all my relations,  
Their names, birthplaces,  
And occupations.  
There must be asterisks;  
Footnotes would be grand,  
With miles of instructions  
I can't understand.  
And when it's black  
With immense block-letters  
I must get on the track  
Of one of my betters:  
For it mustn't be signed,  
Of course, by me  
Till I can find  
A respectable J.P.,  
A Minister of Religion,  
A Barrister or Notary,  
A Commissioner for Oaths,  
Or a Member of Rotary.

I want a permit  
To ask for a licence  
To make application  
For a nice fat form.  
Now don't get excited!  
I'm not anti-social,  
I don't want to do things—  
I only want a form.  
I'll give no trouble  
Of any sort:  
I promise not to buy,  
And I won't export.  
I won't make money;  
I'll be quiet as a mouse.  
I'm not conspiring  
To build a house.  
I'll tell you why  
I require this form:  
I've got no coupons,  
And I must keep warm. A. P. H.

## H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

SOMETIMES, when engaged in Literature, wearing and hazardous is what I find getting off the mark. Ending is fairly easy. You write Finis, or the equivalent in some other tongue if simpler for you; but beginning is the very devil, because the reader starts cold and has to be got going, and before you have time to make clear to him what type of literature is about to occur he may sink back out of your grasp. To improve myself I often examine the methods of my brothers of the pen, and to assist others who find similar difficulty I shall devote this Belle-Lettre to quoting the first paragraph of various works taken at random from my shelves.

"Little Mr. Popplewell picked up his cuff-links which were airing in front of the fire and cast an apprehensive glance through his gold spectacles. Outside the cosy room, with its well-lined bookcases and deep, comfortable chairs, a cloud was crossing the sky. Did that mean rain? If it did, little Mr. Popplewell knew he should put on his rubber socks, but on the other hand it might mean cold, and then Old Emma would make him wear corks in his ears. Little Mr. Popplewell wriggled and blushed with embarrassment, yet what would his feelings have been had he known that before the day was out he was to be pitch-forked into

notoriety, interviewed by journalists, questioned by great hairy men with pipes, asked to show exactly how he had found the body, and (bless my soul, you'll never believe it) that by putting two and two together he was to discover the murderer ahead of Scotland Yard itself? But all that lay in the future. Just at the moment little Mr. Popplewell was putting hot chestnuts inside his gloves."

"The light filtered through number nine chute like tooth-paste from a tube. Rozzer tightened the belt with a hammer and spat at a cockroach. 'Anyone got a packet of fags?' The words hung heavy and meaningless in the gritty air, as Boy switched the boiling steam on to the valves. The day-shift had been on for five hours and dawn was breaking. There outside the curlew and the bitter salt of the wind on the shaggy grass: there outside Lou and Min wringing the necks of the rabbits for the early market. He wondered what soap the billet would be smelling of to-day—White Windsor, Carbolic or Super-scented? Rozzer swore, cleaning his nails with a '9 adze. The sergeant came in with a slide-rule. None of the men looked at him. He took a reading, stood a moment watching the retort with its glowing filament, then squelched out through the discards ankle-deep on the floor. Boy fixed the bandage on his thumb with a boot-lace. Rozzer spat at an earwig. 'Uncle' thought of the Euston Road, curling like a snake into the heart of time. He thought very slowly. He thought of about two feet a minute."

"Edwin was just too late for the olives in vermouth. At the moment ffulk was talking; he was using Italian with the family accent, which went back to an ancestor who had had lessons from Reginald Pole, his sensitive, predatory hands reflected in the soup, variously according to whether it were thick or clear. Derry broke in excitedly, 'Truth, Beauty, Goodness, I can't see beyond that, not now, not yet.' The waiter replaced *Cabillard aux modes de Sardanapale* with *Veau comme chez Voisin*. 'Degas . . . Minkowski . . . Propertius . . .' Edwin heard himself, witty, well-educated, detached, pulling his weight, earning the '23 Roquefort which was to crown the dinner. He could still see ffulk ducking a teetotaller in champagne after a Buller Dinner, smoking his opium pipe in the gilded salons of the Faubourg, haggling for incunabula at the book-stalls in the hard Florentine sunlight . . . but somehow ffulk seemed to have passed on. The waiter lit the brandy on the ice-pudding. 'To Be In Tune With The Infinite, the Vedas tell you how?' asked Derry with his ageless boyishness. The curve of ffulk's nose sharpened. He explained, 'You can see it best in Plotinus . . .' 'Meum est propositum in taberna mori,' Edwin murmured, half to his wineglass, half to anyone who would listen."

"'Mishka, Mishka,' shouts the old woman at the bottom of the staircase, but I do not stir. 'Not to-day, not to-day,' I shout, 'it is holiday.' Soon I shall hear Comrade Ivan scratching himself under the arms, then Sonia and Boris will run shouting down the road to the Technical Institute. The Technical Institute has holiday at a different time from the Culture High School. Shall I go sailing on the lake, or shall I take out the little white dog for Granny Anna on the corner? Last year Anna was made People's Rat-catcher of Honour. My class performed Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture outside her flat. To-day is holiday. Shall I



"And if you want anything, just ring."



*"Are you busy just now Mr. Wilkinson?"*

visit someone's grave, or attend the class of English Pastimes with the British Council teacher? Here is the solution of my puzzlement. We are to revise Marbles and begin Hop-scotch. To-day is holiday."

"A letter from G. J., offering £1,500 for St. Lazare III. I calculate that to accept this will leave me penniless, as under the new arrangements with the Income Tax all ready cash is split between them and the Bank. Spent morning drafting letter to fifty leading novelists, asking them what character in fiction they would choose as a companion on a cross-Channel swim. At lunch propounded the theory that Hamlet killed his father himself. Angus said there were far fewer things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in my philosophy. Tossed up between a verse-drama somewhere down the Fulham Road and Jan playing Beethoven. Jan eventually won. Sent up note to platform—'Hence, loathed melancholy.' Jan obligingly accelerated the metronome and the programme finished allegretto. At 4.53 in the Haymarket I made two new-year resolutions: one, never to go to Ballet unless I am given a box with a camp-bed; two, never to go to Ballet at all. Roughed out my notice of 'Juke-Box Judy,' correcting the last accent by 7.15. Passed the evening in a state of serendipity, the lyric of the principal song containing the same vowels in the same order as Stevenson's essay on Walking-tours. Played bridge till two with Willy Mendelsohn, who convulsed us with a great performance

of George Alexander riding tandem with Mrs. Pat. On returning home tuned piano. I was taught this art exactly forty-nine years ago by George Whitehouse at Stourbridge Fair. Retired to bed with a magnum and an 1843 Bottin. Was working out whether it wouldn't be cheaper to keep my horses on a yacht when fell asleep."

○ ○

### *"On Such a Night . . ."*

On such a night, when icy blasts and cruel  
Blew through the curtains from the snow-bound  
street,  
When blood was nipped and scarcity of fuel  
Had robbed the fireside of its ancient heat,  
On such a night, I say, so bleak, so lonely,  
Whether through deep design or merely piqued,  
My refuge from the storm, my one and only  
Hot-water bottle leaked.

G. F. B.

○ ○

#### Faint Praise

"That the Liberal Party in England has ceased to count in the scheme of politics Liberal leaders refuse to admit."

*New Zealand paper.*



*"Aye, and that be my Granfer when he wor a little nipper."*

## Jubilee

A MIGHTY brain was his, I ween,  
Who first projected on the screen  
His Moving Picture Show,  
And that—so fast the years have flown—  
(A new and brilliant thought, you'll own)  
Was fifty years ago.

At birth, we learn, 'twas indistinct;  
It flicked and wobbled, winked and blinked,  
But when was youth a crime?  
No one could guess (and no one did)  
What magic subtleties lay hid  
In the dark womb of time.

But Came The Dawn when Hollywood  
Looked on the thing, and thought it good,  
And, with a happy touch,  
Over its young beginnings loosed  
Publicity combined with Boost  
And Oomph, and It, and such.

So, in no time, a wealth of Stars  
Glowed redly, like the planet Mars,  
Wherever man could gaze,  
And woman too was deeply stirred  
By Glamour, that seductive word,  
So rum are woman's ways.

But Science, undefeated still,  
Had yet a culminating thrill,  
A wide and general boon:  
The Talkie came, at one fell stroke  
Emitting English as She's spoke  
And crooners as they croon.

Thus far to-day. What time may bring  
May I with luck be spared to sing  
Later, perhaps, or sooner.  
Oomph may subside, and It may go,  
But what I'd really like to know  
Is, what about the crooner?

DUM-DUM.



THE BOYHOOD OF TRADE RALLY



*"Another of these confounded lady-drivers."*

### Diary of a Country Dweller

Jan. 3rd. 4.30 P.M. Am disturbed in contemplation of plans for projected haha by loud splintering of wood accompanied by imprecations of recognizably military nature. As I feared, lorry with "L" on tail has backed heavily into paddock fence. The two soldiers who climb out are charmingly apologetic and mean it when they assure me they will return to-morrow with the necessary. I thank them and give them each cup of tea and we have long talk about future of British Empire, but mentally I begin to gather tools. Am old enough to know how life strews its obstacles. Reject theory put forward later in domestic council that reconstitution of fence should be entrusted to Mr. Christmas. Luckily have by me plenty of timber from old loose-box.

Jan. 4th. Continue mentally to gather tools. (Am constantly finding myself much impeded in work as practical man by operation of well-known principle of Dispersal of Implements. This must be one of most

natural of all natural laws, and is in my case accelerated by special family talents. One of things intend to get round to once cesspool under proper control and plans of haha crystallized is creation of some kind of central harbourage for all implements, with stiff scale of penalties for leaving bradawls on roof of fowl-house and Dutch hoes under drawing-room sofa.) Soldiery do not show up.

Jan. 5th. Opinion hardening that Christmas should be engaged, and at breakfast am obliged to take refuge in frankly unintelligible leader on monetary manoeuvres in Budapest. Succeed in gathering tools after somewhat wordy scene hinging on discovery of saw, very rusty, in hedge.

9.25 A.M. Study fence. Simple, straightforward job. No more than ten feet involved, but important stretch connecting five-barred gate into paddock with wicket-gate to backdoor. Neither gate will now shut, thus leaving us at mercy of any passing wild animal. Decide that first object

of attack must be removal of lateral bars, both fractured beyond repair.

9.26. Select steel instrument suspected to be chisel and begin to prise.

9.27. Steel instrument disintegrates. Select larger steel instrument and begin to prise.

9.29. Still prising, but no dividend declared. Endeavour to influence steel instrument with mallet. Mallet wins and steel instrument disintegrates.

9.30. Stand back and light pipe ostentatiously. Have often observed with inanimate objects in state of rebellion how it pays to lull them into false sense of security and then come on them unawares.

9.31. Creep up to fence with small pick-axe thing and leap on it. Fence surprised into yielding half-inch, but still resisting strongly.

9.32. Pick-axe and upper bar resolve mutually on suicide pact and both give up at same moment, driving large splinter into my hand. Fortunately have laid down as one of

Absolute Rules of Country Dwelling that iodine and adhesive plaster always waiting. (Whisky, too, in case of snake-bite, though this seems to suffer from non-medicinal wastage.)

9.33. First aids fail me, if not words. Lodge strong protest through usual channels and submit to crude attentions, of which take leave to doubt germicidal value.

9.55. Return to battle. Lower bar has been very firmly affixed at some dark period of English history when time and nails were cheap. Decide to lower its morale with a saw.

9.57. Saw engages three-inch nail and retires hurt.

9.58. Recollect having seen steel rod lying about in paddock in way sundries do lie about unaccountably in paddock. Begin search for steel rod.

10.15. Still searching for steel rod.

10.22. Abandon search for steel rod.

10.22½. Trip up over steel rod.

10.23. Introduce steel rod to lower bar and lean on it.

10.24. Steel rod unexpectedly turns out to be only iron rod after all. Pick myself out of mud to find very old man claiming to have built fence forty years before. Ask, is he not ashamed of such flimsy work? Replies yes, he'd have liked to make her more solid-like but he was rushed. Urges use of crowbar.

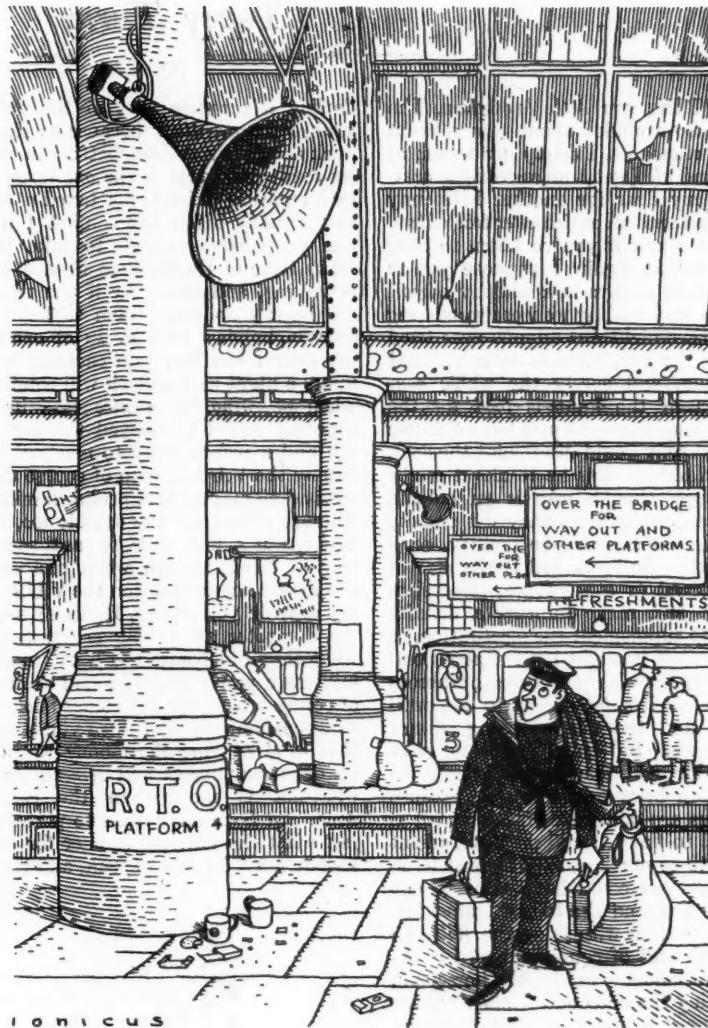
10.45. Paddock yields large number of perambulator wheels but no crowbars.

10.50. Consider close-range demolition of fence with shotgun. Head aching rather. Send request for aspirin into house by baker, who returns with two tablets, glass of water and suggestion in poor taste that another lorry might be induced to finish job.

10.57. Am about to go into action against final portion of lower bar with large blunt instrument when V.O.M., who has taken root, sneezes, and final portion of lower bar falls to ground. Gate-posts must now be straightened. To this end decide to employ battering-ram. Persuade V.O.M., to whom technique is new, to hold cushion against post to save new white paint, while I retire some distance up road with heavy clothes-prop.

11.05. Having uttered prearranged signal of three whoops I charge. Ram unfortunately misses gate-post, and in effort of avoiding evisceration of V.O.M. impale myself violently on it.

11.20. Still prone, though less so to country life. As artificial respiration V.O.M. regales me with vivid account of thoroughness displayed in installation of posts. Suspect that, like icebergs, seven-eighths of them are out of sight.



"Will Able-Seaman Evans, about to travel on the 2.30, return to his demobilization centre and collect one front stud, one back stud, and a set of cuff-links which he left behind?"

11.25. Start digging to loosen post.

11.30. Tension develops. Between me and the gate-post.

12.00. Digging, interrupted only for reasons of health, continues. Gate-post remains delightfully unaffected.

12.15. Weakening, but still digging.

12.30. Say good-bye to pleistocene ooze and enter Old Red Sandstone. Gate-post still pointing nor-nor-east.

12.45. Spade making occasional automatic movements, but am already suffering from advanced stage of Picasso-before-the-eyes. V.O.M. says,

well, he must be off. Hear myself whisper, would he be kind enough to ask Christmas to look in for a moment this afternoon?

12.50. Totter in to lunch. To inquiry, How is fence, reply shortly, Oh, comme ci, comme ça. ERIC.

• •

"Shaw declared that the word 'bom' should be spelled 'bomb,' dropping the final 'b'."—Egyptian paper.

And how many "b's" in "boob"?

## Topsy Turvy

xv

**T**RIX, you little *land-clam*, I'm too wounded about your reticent responses, I empty my bosom at you and all I get is an unreadable post-card, my dear for another halfpenny you can send an entire letter free of tax, but of course if you've taken to your *horse-hobbies* again I suppose you're practically always in a healthy *stupor*, by the way darling we were wondering the other night has anyone ever tried *eating* the fox, because after all that exertion, and surely the whole conception of the hunt is food for the hungry squaws and squawlers, of course I suppose it would disappoint the dogs, and Haddock says he thinks it might be *tough*, though why is an enigma because one gathers they eat nothing but the most expensive poultry, anyhow why don't you and Henry start a new breed of *eating-foxes*, three sizes larger, and make hunting a definite drive to supplement the meat-ration, in which case it might have a permanent niche in the *planned economy*, whereas otherwise it's too likely to be anti-social and the undone thing, if not denounced by *Uno*, the only other hope for you Haddock thinks is to somehow bring *betting* into it, because he says anything with betting in it is bound to flourish and no Government dares to so much as sniff against it, so perhaps you could have Four to one on the Fox, and Ten to one against Mr. Peasepudding witnessing the Kill and so forth and of course mounted bookmakers galloping among the horsemen, changing the odds and stimulating the sternmost, honestly my dear you must confess there is a sort of marginal sanity to my at first sight esoteric and even certifiable suggestion, well for example glance for a moment at these inconceivable greyhound-contests, to which my dear I used to guiltily creep from time to time before the late conflict, and as a matter of fact I've just begun to more or less resume the wicked ways, not of course for self-enjoyment darling far from it, because my dear following the dogs, which by the way is what you call your quaint proceedings isn't it so you see we have got a few spots in common, well actually it is about the most exhausting form of human toil, my dear not a moment's peace, incessant arithmetic which as you know was never my ace activity, and constant bodyjostles with swarms of V.U.P.s, which is short of course for Very Unmagnetic Persons, no

darling it's purely part of the drive against the overdraft, because as Haddock wistfully reiterates betting in this bat-conducted world is the one form of cash-creation which is not taxed at all, and actually before the conflict I did one year create enough to take the entire tribe of Haddock to France, too satisfying, and this year if the twins are back I do want them to have a halcyon holiday with weeks of ozone, my dear I can hear you cackling but many a night as Haddock will confirm when yearning for a nice read in a soporific seat I've obeyed the better self and marched away to martyrdom among the V.U.P.s, who of course one must admit may all have prolific families who are aching for the seaside too, so perhaps it's not quite so anti-social as you think, though when one sees the figures not to mention the V.U.P.s, my dear do you realize, Haddock says the dog-totes are taking nearly twice what they did before the war, seventy millions a year I think he said though of course a mass of that comes back in winnings, but my dear when you think that in three years the money we put on dogs and horses and Arsenal and what-not is more than the entire American Loan one begins to perceive just what the national hunger for the seaside must be, so to speak, and they

say why there are quite no taxis in London is they're all waiting for wad-hunters at the dogs, I couldn't tell.

Well darling I don't want to ululate too soon, because it is so flattening when you think you have the longest holiday practically in the bank when suddenly those irrational beasts begin to do the wrongest things and day by day the little gainings dwindle, but actually at the moment we are about ten Peppiatts on the way to Cornwall, of course I'm behaving quite cautiously at present, sort of taking the pulse of things so to speak, but I rather think it's going to be less laborious to win a wad than it was, because you see in the old days one made an absolute study of the form and everything, utterly of course against my principles and nature, my dear I do feel in some things the little intuition is practically infallible, you can't guess how many times when I hear what's won the Big Race I say Yes I thought so I chose that horse this morning, by the name, in fact as Haddock says if only I'd backed them all we'd be rich enough to pay the income-tax, at one time that was my absolute method, because say what you like a good name is half the struggle, by the way darling did you see we're now talking about the Soviet Ballet which Haddock says is the utter terminus of twaddle, game set and match, because if there was one thing you might expect to go on being merely Russian, however he's got a bet with two Ambassadors that before Easter we shall hear about the Soviet language, and people will say they're learning Soviet, well to go back to my philanthropic dogs, by the way darling stiff and stupefied though you may be with indifference to my poor dogs you must recall what weeks of agony in time past I've suffered with a smile from hearing the news about yours, my dear shall I ever forget the day you found in Twillington Bottom and killed in Somebody's Patch after a celestial run, and Henry narrated me over about five counties, in and out of covers and ploughed fields, with hounds feathering and faltering and footling, is that right, my dear too defatigating, so darling put one more pillow behind the old back and try to concentrate on the primitive customs of the capital, I can see no plausible cause for your peering snootily at my little dogs, after all all dogs are dogs and it might be said that Henry and me



"I just wanted to let you know that your crime wave has reached No. 11 Oxton Crescent."



*"No, you can't have any more sweets. You've had a very good lunch."*  
*"Not a good lunch of SWEETS!"*

were twin facets of British dog-love, not to mention the *chase*, because it's all very well for you to say that my dogs are hunting a merely spurious *hare*, half the time your dogs are after an imaginary *fox*, and anyhow as I was saying you bring *no* more back to the larder than I do, so, sorry darling I must look back to see where I was, Oh yes about the *form*, well when I began this quite serious dog-following phase I read all the dog-columns in invisible print, the little eyes became beady and dim, my dear, I wouldn't think of backing a beast at *Wimbledon* unless I knew exactly what he'd done in the last six races at Harringay and *Hounslow*, what he beat, which trap, how fast, and what was the weather, my dear protracted and lethal labour, however now I gather, I expect you've read in the papers about the bizarre behaviour, my dear subethical men spending the night in kennels and issuing suddenly with obtruse drugs

so that every dog but one in a race resents running about half-way round, too ingenious, and now there are rumours of more uncivic devices, my dear in the old days one could stand close against the track and have a stirring view of the little yelpers, which is actually a decorative spectacle, even my dear when a girl's own dog is bitten at the corner and then beaten by a short nose, but now it seems they're going to push us back because they think some citizens may throw small rats, guinea-pigs, invisible mice or even lizards onto the course, not to mention drawing-pins and lumps of glue, so as to distract the doggies and frustrate the bookies, though how you can arrange for one dog to pursue a rat but not another, however personally I'm positively in favour of all this, for one thing darling it brings the whole thing don't you think into line with your sport, the chances of the *chase* I mean, like the fox-dogs going off

after a sheep or the fox being headed by an ugly governess, in fact if I were the management I should have surprise items in every race, wild-cats my dear and old bones and explosive hurdles, because think what a farnought breed of dog you might develop, and then perhaps we could export it to America, ranking who knows with Scotch W. and the *race-horse*, but of course the main claim for the new technique is that it will cut out nearly all that petrifying nonsense about *form* and so forth, the whole thing will be a genuine gamble, I shall merely choose a nice name like I used to or sometimes possibly a nice-coloured dog and trust to intuition and natural justice, anyhow I must be off darling, I'll put ten bob on the third race for you, and tell Henry to think out about getting some betting into the *fox-field*, you must see what a political asset, I'm late farewell your industrious Topsy.

A. P. H.

### At the Play

#### "Now THE DAY IS OVER" (EMBASSY)

ASSUMING that a crime-play should be as assessable as a pure-bred Sealyham, what are the special points for which the judges must look? Coming home from this piece of lethal business I was trying to describe it to an imaginary person, and the imaginary person, who appeared to be reasonably clear-headed, considering the time of night, submitted the following questions:

(1) *Is it a Whodunnit or a Will-he-be-caught?* All crime-plays must fall into one or other of these categories, even if the cadaver on the divan turns out to have helped himself to cyanide as a purely personal whim.

(2) *Degree of Suspense?* How much are you made to mind?

(3) *Degree of Surprise?* A twin question to (2), but by no means Siamese. You can have (3) without much of (2), as for instance, in a rather flat thriller when the man to whom you have pinned your faith for two acts as the gentlemanly garrotter-about-town is suddenly unmasked as the Bishop of the Wayward Isles on furlough. It operates vice versa, too, but not for long. However much you have been worked up, unless the author has shown himself by the end of the second act to be capable of a fast one then the pressure gauge is dropping hopelessly and you would be better in bed.

(4) *Does it go for the brain or the solar plexus?* The distinction is fundamental, and who is to say which is the finer flower of civilization? One is a crossword-puzzle worried over in a mortuary, the other a brutal romp which makes little cerebral demand but can leave an audience as physically tired as if they had spent the time waiting for the Home Secretary's reprieve. *Ten Minute Alibi* is a good example of the first, *The Ringer* of the second.

(5) *Probability?* One definition of a thriller is that it is the only kind of play in which a dramatist cannot get away with murder, and this is another way of saying that whereas in tragedy,

comedy and the mongrel mimes a cunning author working hand in glove with a cunning producer can easily make you think black is white, the presence of corpses and detective-inspectors has the effect of making you very sensitive to errors in perspective.

(6) *Style of Detection?* i.e., serious or merely pantomime? Stage sleuths tend more and more to be walking laboratories who have renounced Chairs of Philosophy for a Locker at the Yard, but the man who owes it all to beer still crops up.

Medium. (3) You are made to expect more twists than in fact there are, which perhaps is to the author's credit. But for a play which is obviously careful work the machinery is a trifle simple. (4) The second. There are quite a lot of thrills, reinforced by a nice bit of strangling. (5) So far as the crime is concerned, very fair. But the *Chief Constable* misses fire as a caricature, and any young girl who pursued any young man in any north-country town in the way *Lily* pursues *Charlie* would quickly be shown the drawbridge by the Watch-and-Ward committee. (6) Serious in the main. (7) The cracks are meritoriously unforced.

The story describes how a much-respected maniac, erotically thwarted, succeeds in slicing up two victims before being caught, his method being to throw suspicion on to another lunatic, a simple harmless amateur of broken glass. This other lunatic is a neat stratagem and deftly handled; and there is a tellingly filled-in background of a friendly lodging-house where an atmosphere of lively piety makes an effective foil.

It is a sound workman-like thriller without being remarkable. Mr. TERENCE DE MARNEY plays the lead, and his *Charlie* is an able study of a neurotic sheltering behind a façade of hearty conceit. Miss BEATRICE VARLEY's staunch landlady is a good character delightfully acted, Scotland Yard could find no fitter representative than Mr. IAN FLEMING, whose quiet donlike manner would hamstring the astutest knave, and as the

simpleton Mr. BILL ROWBOTHAM leads public opinion up the garden path just as far as he should. Among some of the minor parts there is a slight uncertainty of accent.

The producer was Mr. DE MARNEY, and I wanted to ask him across the lights why it was that, though it was raining hard enough to drench young *Hughie*, Mr. *Forsythe* came back from his rambles as dry as a Beaune.

ERIC.

○ ○

All We Like Sheep . . .

"WOOL EXPERIMENT—NO MORE CLOTHES"  
Heading in daily paper.



SCOTLAND YARD SPOTTING THE LOSER.

Auntie B. . . . .	MISS BEATRICE VARLEY
The Man from London . . . . .	MR. IAN FLEMING
Mr. Forsythe . . . . .	MR. CHRISTOPHER STEELE
Charlie Ramskill . . . . .	MR. TERENCE DE MARNEY
Hughie . . . . .	MR. BILL ROWBOTHAM

(7) *Humour?* Are the gags incidental, or is the play out to be funny at all costs? The crime-play that is the latter is suspect from the beginning, and turns out as likely as not to be the kind in which the murderer has had his finger-prints engraved on his revolver before starting out.

At this point my questioner got out of the train, and I passed the rest of the journey applying his list to this adaptation of Mr. GERALD SAVORY's novel *Behold This Dreamer*, by the author and Mr. CHARLES K. FREEMAN. The answers were: (1) A Will-he-be-caught. You are handed the murderer as soon as the curtain goes up. (2)

## Weather

**T**IT is pleasant to have something to talk about now that I am back in England, and delightful to find that people still make the same dear old remarks, such as "Windy to-day, isn't it?" "Touch of frost this morning, I think," and "The wireless says it will be worse before it is better," together with other remarks of a similar nature but more luridly expressed.

It has probably been observed, though naturally the people at home are too polite to mention it, that soldiers returning from the Middle East tend to be rather more morose and taciturn than when they went away. This is not, as might be supposed, because they have looked on life in the raw and let the iron enter their soul, but because for three or four years, owing to there being hardly any weather at all in Egypt, they have had nothing to talk about, and have lost the habit. Bagdad, I understand, is so hot that quite a lot of time can be spent talking about the heat, and it is possible without much effort to get one's boots wet in Palestine and have a good time telling everybody how the soles turned out, after all, to be only cardboard, but Egyptian weather (except for one delightful downpour in 1944 which we talked about for months) presents hardly any conversational opportunity.

Possibly it is because I am not used to it, but there seems to be more weather of various sorts at Mutton-on-Sea, where Sympson and I are living in adjacent flats, than I remember experiencing anywhere in England before the war.

"Window blew in last night," said Sympson with gloomy satisfaction this morning as he dropped in before breakfast. "Do you mind if I have a bite of something with you, old fellow? Pilot-light of the water-heater blew out when the window collapsed, and I hadn't any matches."

He then consumed practically the whole of my week's ration of bacon, while I told him about the draught that comes in under my bedroom door.

"It isn't an ordinary straight sort of draught that you can dodge," I explained, "but a curly draught that follows you round the room and then suddenly rises and blows ornaments off the mantelshelf. When a south-west wind is blowing my bedroom is practically uninhabitable."

"Why not sleep in the library when the south-west wind is blowing?"



*"My husband's no good as an electrician, but he's terribly clever at carpentry."*

he asked, digging deep into my month's pot of marmalade.

"Don't be ridiculous," I said, "surely you know winds well enough to be aware that if you run away from them they follow you? As soon as I move my bed into the library the wind changes to east and comes howling down the chimney, covering everything with soot. And don't tell me to get a sweep. I have nine sweeps on order at the moment but they do not come, although every morning I drape all the furniture in sheets ready for them, so that I might as well live continually in a mortuary."

"I don't mind the wind," said Sympson. "But the rain comes through my ceiling. The landlord said he would put it right and climbed up on the roof, but the only result was that he came through the ceiling too, and

on the whole I would sooner it rained rain than rained landlords."

We are both really enjoying the weather very much and getting out of the silent habits developed during our sojourn in the mysterious East, but personally I shall not feel I am really at home until the first hot weather comes and I can tell Sympson that it is not so much the heat as the humidity that I dislike.

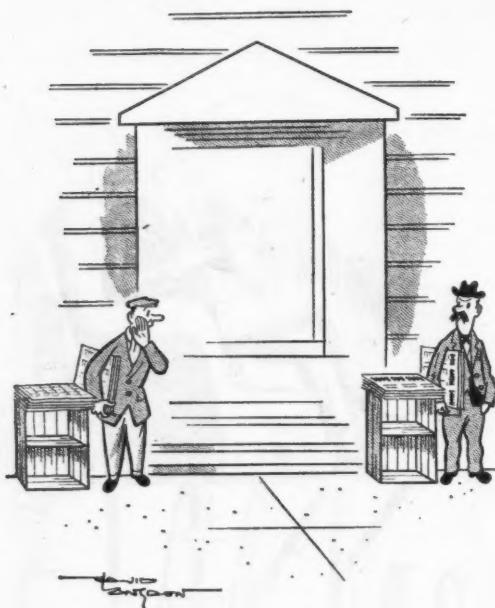
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### "PLOT DISCOVERED"

#### UNEASY TIMES IN SPAIN

For the first time in the history of Allahabad Fort, the Union Jack flying over it was removed to-day and the Congress flag hoisted in its stead."—N.Z. paper.

One day that Franco will go too far.



"P-ssst! Your headlines are showing."

### Our Booking-Office (By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Easy on the Eye

"As an onlooker I sometimes had the impression that what I saw happening around me was taking place on a stage . . . I remember a still, autumn morning when softly rounded clouds floated in a pale blue sky, and the white walls and red roofs became blended in the pale sunlight. It was the kind of scene one might imagine as the décor of a ballet; but instead, there was a German stronghold in that dip between the hills." EDWARD SEAGO writes this in the introduction to his book of war pictures, *With the Allied Armies in Italy* (COLLINS, 15/-). It is the clue to his success and his failure too. Impossible not to admire the pure touches of olive and rose; violet blue and ochre, his rendering of light and rain-washed air, his clean Impressionist palette on which one can almost see him squeezing out the paint. Impossible, too, to find among these pleasant oils the murderous cold of winter in the Italian mountains or the feelings of the men who hung on to that precarious foothold in Salerno Bay, took Rome (for the first time in history) from the South, and crossed the Rubicon to the Alps—all against some of the best defensive positions the Germans ever held. Mr. SEAGO's pen and wash drawings show men and mules and equipment as patches of spiky darkness in a charming pattern. This is the battle without the agony; compare his "Broken Bridge at Cesena" with Paul Nash's "Broken Bomber in a Cornfield." But to all this Mr. SEAGO might reply that he is not an official war artist. He has offered us what he wanted to do and managed to do—something which is not magnificent, and not war, but turns out to be very agreeable painting.

P. M. F.

#### The Wrong Turning

It is a commonplace that otherworldly people get, as a rule, the most entertainment out of life. It is equally true that those less implicated in worldliness get a better view of the field than those for whom a place in the scrum is essential. So one is not surprised to find Monsignor RONALD KNOX analysing the impact of the atomic bomb on mankind with memorable courage and sagacity. It is his chance—and how brilliantly he has taken it!—to provide an opportunity to think for those less happily adapted to that feat than himself. *God and the Atom* (SHEED AND WARD, 7/6) is written for the ordinary man. Not for the citizen—who is less than a man—but for man responsible to his own conscience. His historical background is here; his philosophy, which tended to fade out with Kant; and his science, which had assumed for him a slightly unpractical air when Hiroshima demonstrated its superb practicality. At Hiroshima, Monsignor KNOX believes, we missed a supreme spiritual chance of foregoing a material advantage. The mass mind, in its greed and cowardice, betrayed the human soul. "If the decision had lain with a single man, not bound to consult anybody's interests but his own, Hiroshima would probably have been spared."

H. P. E.

#### An Interesting Miscellany

Mr. SOMERSET DE CHAIR was an Intelligence officer in the Holy Land during the war, and in *The Golden Carpet* narrated the story of the Iraq revolt led by Raschid Ali, in the suppression of which he took part. The two main themes of his new book, *A Mind on the March* (FABER, 10/6), are action and religion, and he treats these themes in a number of sketches which include reconstructions of famous historical episodes, meditations on the character and teaching of Christ, and a personal impression of Helena of Abu Sinan, a nine-year-old Christian Arab child whose gifts as a healer excited a great deal of attention in Palestine in the earlier years of the war. Mr. DE CHAIR pictures her delightfully as "just a natural, if enchanting, child," and adds that he did not care very much whether she had divine powers or not. This admission may recur to the reader when he comes to Mr. DE CHAIR's pages on Christ in the sketch entitled "The Philosophy of a Wounded Man." Like Kipling, from whom he quotes some interesting advice to himself on the art of writing, Mr. DE CHAIR needs action and movement to bring out his powers. His description of Oliver Cromwell's maiden speech is excellent, his attempt to let one into Cromwell's thoughts and emotions unconvincing. In his best sketch, an account of Christ's trial before Pilate, he confines himself to the kind of impression an average young Roman officer would have carried away.

H. K.

#### Hard Training

*Lower Deck* (MACMILLAN, 7/6) was written by Lieutenant JOHN DAVIES, R.N.V.R., when he was a "C.W.," which means that his name was put down for temporary commission in the R.N.V.R. on the Commissions and Warrants List, there to remain until he had survived three months of lower-deck life satisfactorily. As one of the ratings remarked to him, "You lives on the mess deck long enough to become a pretty decent seaman, and almost fit for 'uman society, and then you go and leave. Meanwhile you ain't one thing or the other—you ain't a rating, and you ain't an officer. You can 'ave it." Luckily, it is we who "have it" in the present book, for Lieutenant DAVIES has combined a flair for writing and friendship and, above all, appreciation of the seven mess-mates who "possessed

little in this world except loyalty, generosity and magnificent courage" and to whom the book is dedicated. It begins abruptly when the author climbs to the after-bridge in the destroyer, H.M.S. *Skye* (a member of the Malta Striking Force in 1942) and ends with suddenness after the sinking of the ship—"Her ship's company has vanished for ever as a unit, that strangely composite yet united body of men which through trial and tribulation and triumph took on a character transcending that of the individuals of which it was composed." As readers, we are enriched throughout the book by the companionship of at least seven of these men—particularly Geordie, who has his own theme-song—"Ain't it deadly? Ain't it simply bleedin' deadly?" In a preface Admiral Sir JAMES SOMERVILLE writes: "The humour will appeal to every sailor and to every student of humanity . . . You will find no heroics . . . Lieutenant Davies has rendered a great service in giving us this essentially truthful picture of how a gun's crew lived, thought, occasionally slept, and very occasionally relaxed." There could be no better comments than those.

B. E. B.

#### China : the Seamy Side

Having emerged, he says, a sadder and wiser man from four years' commercial experience in China, Flying Officer RICHARD P. DOBSON has written a robust and serviceable book on his career as purveyor of British cigarettes to the Orient. A Cambridge oar, he chose his job for its adventurous possibilities; and his *China Cycle* (MACMILLAN, 12/6) played up to his expectations. Adventures, more squalid than dazzling, invariably beset him, whether in remote Asiatic byways or in depots and treaty-ports drawn one by one into the war orbit. Amateurs of really tough travel-stories will get all they want when the traveller begins to improvise his own trade-routes behind the lines. Those more concerned for the repercussions of East and West will gain first-hand information on the effect—disastrous, the writer decides—of Western industrialism on Chinese individualism. On our side, there emerges a picture of isolated European communities, so closely knit in the face of a common menace that Germans, Italians, Frenchmen and Englishmen were for the most part shocked and amazed when their respective homelands fell out. Their prestige in Asia was a bluff—and it was finally called: a fact that future advocates of commercial penetration in similar fields would do well to remember.

H. P. E.

#### On Death

"All shall die," as Justice Shallow well said, and Miss PHÆBE POOL need not have recommended her anthology, *Poems of Death* (FREDERICK MULLER, 10/6), to the reader's attention on the ground that "the subject has been forced on our attention for the last five years." As a collection of poems from our literature illustrating a theme of perennial interest this volume has considerable merit. The old ballads, Shakespeare, Webster, Ben Jonson and Dryden are all represented by excellent and on the whole unhackneyed passages. But the avoidance of hackneyed extracts can be pushed too far, and Swinburne's diffuse "Hicet" might well have made room for his "Garden of Proserpine" or for the beautiful concluding lines of "Tristram of Lyonesse." It is a pity, too, that Miss Pool should have shunned what she calls the "Romantics proper" and "the fashionable eighteenth-century poets." Shelley presumably comes in the first category and Dr. Johnson in the second, for Miss Pool quotes nothing from "Adonais" and has not included Johnson's verses on the death of Levett. "Given the fact of death," she writes, "anything that robs it of its

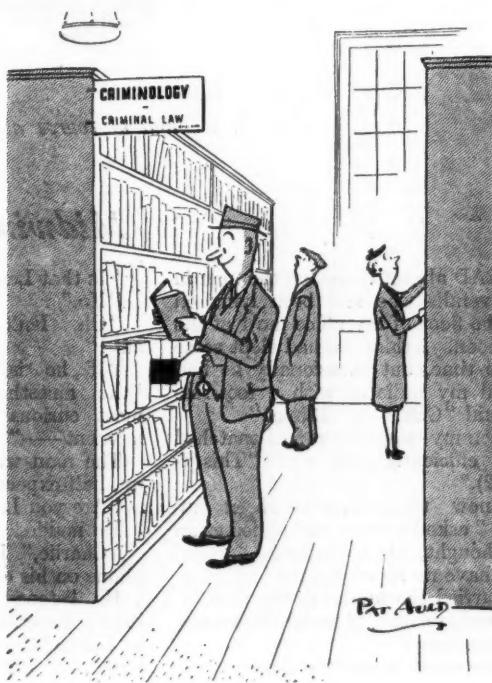
claustrophobia, its meaningless negation, can be a gain." On this principle the last stanza of "Adonais" should certainly not have been omitted; Chaucer's "Through me men come unto the Well of Grace, where green and lusty May doth ever endure" would have been more satisfying than his verses on the death of Troilus; and the last stanza of "The Faerie Queene" than the extracts which Miss Pool has preferred.

H. K.

#### Air Shanties

Lazier members of the Royal Air Force will be grateful to Mr. C. H. WARD-JACKSON for having pursued with diligent pencil the many splendid Nissen-shaking songs peculiar to their Service in this war, and also for researches into the earlier bacchanalia of military flying, the fruit of all of which, covering the whole history of the R.F.C., R.N.A.S., and R.A.F., is contained in *Airman's Song Book* (SYLVAN PRESS, 21/-), a collection as remarkable for the vigour of its understatement as it is for its accurate exposition of the British character. In an introductory essay Mr. WARD-JACKSON apologizes for having had to play the Bowdler, but he has done so with discretion and a minimum cramping of style; the red nursery flag need only be raised for the famous grousing song of home units in this war (in which the sanguinary expletive, long since worn smooth of meaning, occurs fifty-seven times) and possibly for the mock "Service of Thanksgiving for Safe Arrival in Iraq." "The Bold Aviator," vintage 1912, seems to have set the note for most squadron songs, nearly all of which mock death and divide a deep distrust between current types of aircraft and senior officers. Both in argot and allusion these have the rich quality of folk-songs; "Ops in a Wimpey," "Western Desert Madness," "The Firth of Flaming Forth" and "The Benghazi Mail Run" are typical examples from this war. Hymns and such good old-timers as "The Tarpaulin Jacket" normally provide the accompaniments, but some pleasant original settings by Mr. Leighton Lucas are here included.

E. O. D. K.





"... and of course a great deal of it's Elizabethan."

### *Midwinter Madness*

I HAD almost forgotten the man in overalls who had been lying on the floor of my office most of the afternoon. I think he had slept some of the time, but occasionally he had tapped my radiator with a foot-rule and said "Cuh!" or "Blime!"

When my telephone rang I snatched it up efficiently and said "This is D.B.(2)."

"Know what they've been an' done?" asked a voice, and added as an afterthought, "It's Charlie."

"I have no idea. What?"

"Married the intake to the flow."

"Good gracious," I said. "When was the ceremony?"

There was a moment's silence.

"Is that Len?"

"No."

"Oh. Isn't Len pulling your pipes out?"

"If he is," I said facetiously, "the anaesthetic is giving me a most curious dream. Hang on a moment—"

The man with the foot-rule looked up, half-expectant.

"Are you Len?" I asked.

He nodded.

"Charlie," I said, laying the telephone on his chest.

He listened for some time, with brief comments. When he had finished he handed the instrument back. "Cor blime old Riley you wouldn't credit

it!" he said, lying down again. "Ever been down?"

"Down where?"

"Down the boiler."

"Never," I said.

He got to his knees, shaking his head slowly from side to side and making a noise like a puncture. Then he achieved a standing position, transferred his weight to one foot and dealt the radiator a contemptuous kick with the other.

"Got three heads."

"It's got what?"

"Three heads—outlets." He began to make fantastic gestures, turning his large hands outwards from the wrists like an Eastern dancer. "Three

of 'em. One leads off as it might be here, and one as it might be there, and then, call me a liar, there's——"

"No, no."

"Pardon?"

"I didn't want you to think I should call you a liar, that's all."

"All the same if you did. And there's another one shoots off as it might be here."

He stood there flexing his wrists and regarding me morosely, challenging me to be suitably astonished.

"Well, I never," I said weakly.

"Never ought to 'a' been in."

"No?"

"Boiler as big as a biscuit-tin, building this size." He came closer and said loudly. "Three heads!"

"It's awful."

He gave me a disgusted look and went and lay down again.

"You think I'm a liar."

"Not at all."

"That's what you think."

"I tell you I don't. Anyway, I've got to get on with some work."

"Where?" said Len, unexpectedly.

"Why," I said—"here, at my desk. Possibly a bit later on I shall transfer to the typewriter on the small table. I hope that will be all right?"

He took his cap off and struck the radiator several times, not easy from a prone position. The room was filled with a fine dust.

"Depends what Charlie finds."

"I see."

"Got to trace the pipes."

"Oh."

"I expect we shall want to be under your desk."

"Ah."

"Ave all that rammle and boxes out."

"Rammle, perhaps. Boxes—that's rather different. Those are my telephone fittings."

He shrugged.

"Our orders, trace the pipes, let the wind out, get ready for the winter."

"Well," I said, "I suppose if you must, you must. But it seems rather late in the——"

My telephone rang.

"This is D.B.(2)."

"Charlie. Tell Len to come down."

"Hold on, Charlie. . . . It's Charlie. Wants you to go down."

"Tell 'im to come up."

"Right-ho. . . . Len says you're to come up."

I listened a moment before putting down the receiver.

"What's he think I am?" said Len.

"He did say," I murmured.

Charlie turned out to be small and pasty, wearing a sports coat and

flannels which somehow failed to give him the air of an outdoor man. He carried an adjustable wrench rather larger than one usually sees; I imagine it had originally been used in the construction of the Forth Bridge.

"What have you found?" I said.

"What a boiler!"

"With them three heads, eh?" said Len.

Charlie turned to me.

"You got three heads on the boiler," he said.

"So Len tells me. What are you going to do about it?"

"Trace the pipes."

"Ah, I see."

Charlie looked round the room. He stooped to look under my desk. "Have to come out," he said.

"The rammle?"

"That wirin' and them fuse-boxes an' all that fidge-fadge."

"Then I'd better move to the small table."

"Wait a minute," said Len, sitting up. "We got to drag the pipes out all along that wall——"

"An' saw the rusty joins——" said Charlie.

"And I dessay the flooring'll want to come up——"

"An' we'll have to pull the pipes up wherever they are, with that connection through the wall——"

"Ah," said Len, eyeing the wall—"we might have to——"

"Why not take the window out?" I said.

They looked at the window, and Charlie walked over to it and pressed his hand on the centre of the lower pane, as if to test its flexibility.

"I think we can leave that," he said.

"Unless," said Len, "they've got pipes runnin' up in the frame."

"I'd believe anything," said Charlie. He looked round the room again. "Is your clock right?"

"It is. And since you mention it, I don't want to rush you, but if you could give me an idea what part of the room you're not going to take up or pull down, I'll go there and work."

They shook their heads.

"Shan't know for a bit," said Len.

"Not while we come again," said Charlie.

"And when will that be?"

"No telling," said Charlie. "Tain't priority, see? But then again——"

"Then again," said Len, "we've got to get it ready for the winter."

"I must say I should like it ready for the winter—or what's left of it."

"Because," said Charlie, shouldering the monstrous spanner, with another glance at the clock—"it's a condemned building, see?"

"Is it, indeed? I didn't know that, though I've often thought——"

"And," said Len, who had risen and moved towards the door, "they may want to start knockin' it down any day."

"And if everything isn't in order at the superintendent's pre-demolition inspection——"

"They'll take it out on Charlie an' me."

They waited for a moment while the hands of my clock came up to five, then they went out, banging the door behind them and bringing down my coat-hanger and a small quantity of plaster.

I have never seen them since. The only result of their visit is a trickle of cold water that runs out of my radiator constantly and accumulates in a hole in the linoleum just under my desk. I sometimes wish they would come back so that I could discuss this with them. Three heads are better than one.

J. B. B.

## The Simple Heart

or Half a Loaf is . . .

**E**DWARD is considering it. He knows he's thirty-five, he says, but they're taking them that age, and he has given me a verbal inventory of his scholastic acquirements up to the age of fourteen as evidence that he's, as he puts it, "not half bad." I asked him what he'd learned out of school since then, but he didn't seem to see a connection: perhaps there isn't any.

He says he was very well taught, because the teacher was strict, not half! This was in an elementary school in a university town—though it might as well have been in Bletchley or Wigan for all the difference the university made. He could say the Ten Commandments, the Twelve Times, and the Five Continents before he was so high, he says. They had to repeat them all together, Standards 4, 5, 6 and 7, every morning, and they didn't half make a row!

Sums? Miss B. made them get every one right every day, no play if you didn't. Spellings ditto. They wrote composition too, generally on some such theme as "How I Would Spend Five Shillings," and as Miss B. awarded the highest mark to him who said that he would first of all give half-a-crown to the hospital, Edward knows that Good Writing is to be recognized by the morality it expresses; Great Literature, he has noticed, is rather

Sad—look at Little Nell, Oliver Twist and Uncle Tom! When it isn't Sad it is Description.

Miss B. taught them everything, except New. The Vicar took that, and left Miss B. Joseph, Moses and the Fall of Jericho for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Of such men as Nehemiah, of such achievements as the rebuilding of the city, Edward has never heard because Miss B. hadn't. From the Vicar (Tuesday and Thursday) he learned that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning: also that eternity is a little chalk circle daintily drawn on a blackboard, and thus having no beginning and no end. They memorized, each week, something which Edward always thought was called a Colic, and discovered years later to be a Collect, which still seems a funny thing to call it, doesn't it now?

Miss B. taught them Nature too. They had to bring things, "for her to do Nature on" is how he expressed it. They pulled petals off daisies, protesting that it was crool, but Miss B. explained No, it would have been crew-ell if they had pulled all the petals off *all* the daisies: it was necessary for each child to strip a selected daisy, and nothing which is necessary can be cruel. If daisies or hipy-haws were unobtainable Miss B. exhibited her red and blue chart of the human inside, and told them that the human body is such a perfect piece of machinery that if anything goes wrong it is all our own faults.

He was, Edward says, boasting apart, not half bad at drawing. And he knows a good picture when he sees

one—for instance, if a painting has six trees on the river bank and only five reflections in the water, then it isn't a good picture, see? And a lamp-post at the far end of the street has to be a lot shorter than a man at the near end. Miss B. wasn't half hot stuff at trees. She taught him that to draw a tree you have to divide the trunk into two branches, and then divide each of those into two, and so on as far as your piece of paper will permit. Except willow-trees: you draw them, he tells me with a flash of imaginative humour, just like shaving-brushes.

He knows a little about taste in women's dress from Miss B.'s reflections on one Jessie Watts who used to wear a dress of so bright a red that the boys tried to post letters in her mouth. Miss B. told them that the dress looked Common. Red is Common, and the colour that Edward's mother called beej, and Miss B. bajj, is Good Taste. Edward is even now inclined to regard women wearing red with, well—curiosity, and to respect the beige women.

As for music, he's got something there too. Apart from being able to cross hands in "The Robin's Return" and "The Echo of Lucerne" he can tackle a simplified version of Handel's "Largo," using loud and soft pedals alternately.

And to this day he can remember and sing the songs Miss B. drummed into them for Empire Day—"In a Child's Small Hand Lies the Fate of Our Land" and the rest. They always had a celebration in the yard on Empire Day, and a visitor to tell them that England is a Mother

Country and all the other countries worship her as such.

Another visitor came once, not from the university though, and he gave a lecture which they afterwards had to write out on foolscap. Some weeks later Edward received a large pink and gilt certificate, which he carried home, to be greeted with a bewildering burst of hilarity on the part of his uncles as they read out the title of the work which had won him this honour—"Alcohol and the Human Body."

That, more or less, was his education, administered in a draughty and unlovely brick box flanked by a row of stinking lavatories. Not much more than a stone's-throw away, in the grey harmony of antiquity, men young and old drank deep of learning. In another direction the old femmen, who neither read nor wrote, punted their barges among the slow, lilded dykes, and gipsy boys hunted kingups to sell in the town. But Edward, between them, has never known much about either fenland or university.

But what do I think about it, he asks me. His chances ought to be as good as the next man's. He remembers all they ever taught him—you know, about Oliver Cromwell being a saintly man and Charles I such a wrong un: and about the Canadian prairies, thousands of miles with never a tree to be seen, nothing but corn. Oh, yes, he's got plenty, he says, and he's sent for the papers already. Here they are—"Emergency Training Scheme for Teachers." Shall he have a shot at it? Good pension, pay not half bad, and all the rest—What do I say? . . . I say I don't know what to say.



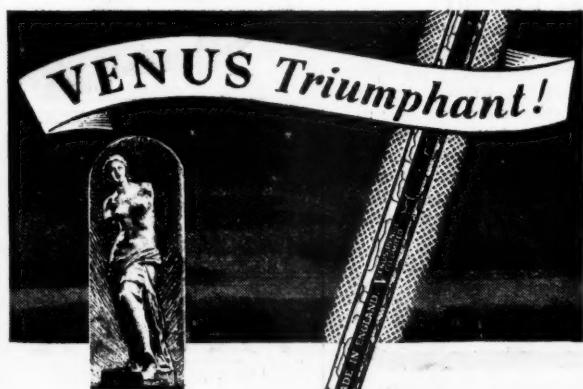
"I take it we end up at that Regional Emergency Food Dump again to-day."

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## RHEUMATISM

Rheumatism—however mild your symptoms—exacts a merciless toll in pain and expense if not checked in time. Poisons and impurities in your system are usually the cause of rheumatic disorders. To get rid of these poisons, doctors recommend the drinking of mineral spa waters. But a visit to a spa involves time and expense that many people simply cannot afford these days.

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### WARM HOMES

Small fires, or no fires? Are the prospects of many this Winter. The Church Army is helping to keep the home fires burning. **WOOD**

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"He was on me before I saw him . . ."



"I was trying to keep the rain out of my eyes" said this young cyclist. Understandable, of course. We policemen see lots of chaps riding blind like that, especially in winter. But it's just asking for an accident."

Nearly 1,200 cyclists were killed on the roads in 1944—some 200 of them under fifteen. One way to stop these awful

tragedies is always to ride with your head up to keep a good look-out—particularly when it's foggy, wet or windy. But it usually takes more than one to make an accident, so whether you're riding, driving or walking, don't endanger others by running into danger yourself. The return of heavy traffic demands extra care from us all.

Keep Death off the Road

Issued by the Ministry of War Transport

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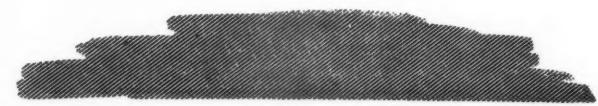
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